



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Effigy Mounds
National Monument

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Effigy Mounds News Release

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OSHA Awards Effigy Mounds National Monument the First VPP Star Designation in the National Park Service

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have recognized Effigy Mounds National Monument for its commitment to employee safety and health in the workplace.

The park was designated a "Star" worksite, OSHA's most prestigious safety rating in the Voluntary Protection Program (VPP), during a public ceremony at the park's visitor center on May 4, 2005. Chief of Maintenance Thomas Sinclair accepted the Star award from OSHA VPP Manager Matt Gaines. Park Ranger Merle Frommelt accepted the VPP Star flag on behalf of the park's safety committee.

Honored guests included Pete Fee (Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska), Richard Powell (Chief, Division of Risk Management, National Park Service, Washington D.C.), Cindy Kohlmann (District Representative, Congressman Jim Nussle), Ernie Quintana (Regional Director, Midwest Region, National Park Service, Craig Dieckman (Board Member, Voluntary Protection Program Participants Association, VPPPA), Matt Gaines (OSHA VPP Manager) and Barbara Theriot (OSHA Director, Des Moines Area Office).

The VPP is designed to recognize and promote effective workplace safety and health management. In the VPP, management, labor and OSHA establish a cooperative relationship at a worksite that has implemented a strong safety and health management system. The VPP program has three levels; demonstration, merit and star. Under a voluntary agreement, specific requirement and performance-based criteria must be met before a site can achieve Star Status. Star participants, who meet all VPP requirements, are at the top of the VPP recognition ladder.

Effigy Mounds was first approved for the Star Program on November 29, 2004. The facility is the first and only of the National Park Service's 388 sites to achieve star status, the highest designation in the OSHA VPP program. Effigy Mounds joins Yellowstone National Park (Merit level designation) as one of only two units to be recognized by OSHA as a VPP worksite. In addition to an exemplary safety and health management system, the facility has an injury and illness recordable incidence case rate far below the National Park Service average.-more-

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Participants in VPP have shown that an investment in the OSHA program is an effective allocation of resources. VPP sites experience fewer employee injuries and illnesses, reduced workers' compensation costs, improved productivity, improved employee morale, and recognition in the community. In addition, sites' safety and health management systems are further improved over time through the internal and external reviews that are part of VPP's ongoing participation requirements.

Becoming a member of the VPP program is a voluntary decision. Because these worksites set the bar for exceptional workplace safety, OSHA will not target a VPP-approved worksite for any regularly scheduled programmed inspections, although a VPP site, of course, must continue to comply with all OSHA safety and health regulations. OSHA retains the responsibility for investigating worker complaints and serious accidents.

According to Superintendent Phyllis Ewing, "Effigy Mounds NM would not have achieved this if it wasn't for the amazing staff at the monument. They did not work to earn this award; they just continued to do things like they always had with dedication, commitment to safety, and love of the park."